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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently amended) A video game device for displaying a play character on a game screen image displayed on a monitor and causing the play character to perform a plurality of techniques having different degrees of difficulty, comprising:

C1 a degree of difficulty setting unit for setting a degree of difficulty of a technique to be performed by the play character, said degree of difficulty setting unit including a mark changing unit for changing a size of a mark, said size of said mark being progressively increased in correspondence with a greater corresponding to the degree of difficulty of the technique;

a command guiding unit for guiding an command input for causing the play character to perform a technique corresponding to the set degree of difficulty,

an operation unit for causing the play character to perform the technique according to the set degree of difficulty, the operation unit including:

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a first operable member for inputting the command in accordance with the command input guide given by the command guiding unit, and

a second operable member, operated by a game player, for causing said mark changing unit to set the size of said mark in response to operations of said second operable member performed by the game player within a predetermined time period;

an evaluating unit for evaluating the technique performed in accordance with a command given by the first operable member.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Original) A video game device according to claim 1, wherein the degree of difficulty setting unit includes a mark changing unit for changing mark corresponding to the degree of difficulty by operating a third operable member provided in the operation unit.

4. (Original) A video game device according to claim 1, further comprising a landing setting unit for causing the play character to land.

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5. (Currently amended) A video game device according to claim 4, wherein for displaying a play character on a game screen image displayed on a monitor and causing the play character to perform a plurality of techniques having different degrees of difficulty, comprising:

a degree of difficulty setting unit for setting a degree of difficulty of a technique to be performed by the play character, said degree of difficulty setting unit including a mark changing unit for changing a size of a mark, said size of said mark corresponding to the degree of difficulty of the technique;

a command guiding unit for guiding an command input for causing the play character to perform a technique corresponding to the set degree of difficulty.

an operation unit for causing the play character to perform the technique according to the set degree of difficulty, the operation unit including:

a first operable member for inputting the command in accordance with the command input guide given by the command guiding unit, and

a second operable member, operated by a game player, for causing said mark changing unit to set the size of said mark in response to operations of said second operable member performed by the game player within a predetermined time period;

an evaluating unit for evaluating the technique performed in accordance with a command given by the first operable member; and

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a landing setting unit for causing the play character to land, the landing setting unit [[sets]] setting a landing setting display area for setting the landing of the play character in a partial area of the game screen image, [[sets]] setting a landing success zone in the landing setting display area, displays displaying a landing mark which is movable, and enables enabling landing of the play character through operation of a fourth operable member provided in the operation unit when the landing mark is located within the landing success zone.

6. (Original) A video game device according to claim 5, wherein the landing success zone is set narrower as the degree of difficulty is set higher.

C1 7. (Original) A video game device according to claim 5, wherein a command input area is set in a partial area of the game screen image, and the command is displayed in the input area in the form of icons.

8. (Original) A video game device according to claim 1, wherein a higher evaluation is given as a shorter time is required to input the command.

9. (Original) A video game device according to claim 1, wherein when the input of the command is not completed within a predetermined time, the play

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character is caused to perform an action different from the one performed when it is completed within the predetermined time.

10. (Original) A video game device according to claim 1, wherein the play character is caused to perform a complicated technique when the set degree of difficulty is high.

CI 11. (Currently amended) A technique setting method for setting a technique in a video game for displaying a play character on a game screen image displayed on a monitor and causing the play character to perform a plurality of techniques having different degrees of difficulty and prepared in advance by operating an operation unit, the method comprising the steps of:

setting a degree of difficulty of a technique to be performed by the play character;

progressively increasing ~~changing~~ a size of a mark in [a manner corresponding to] in correspondence with a greater the degree of difficulty of the technique;

guiding an inputting operation of a command for causing the play character to perform a technique corresponding to the set degree of difficulty;

evaluating the technique performed by inputting the command in accordance with the guide through operation of a first operable member; and

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setting the size of said mark in response to operations of a second operable member by the game player within a predetermined time period.

12. (Canceled)

13. (Original) A technique setting method according to claim 11, further comprising the step of changing a mark corresponding to the degree of difficulty through operation of a third operable member.

14. (Original) A technique setting method according to claim 11, further comprising the step of causing the play character to land.

15. (Currently amended) A technique setting method according to claim 14, further for setting a technique in a video game for displaying a play character on a game screen image displayed on a monitor and causing the play character to perform a plurality of techniques having different degrees of difficulty and prepared in advance by operating an operation unit, the method comprising the steps of:
setting a degree of difficulty of a technique to be performed by the play character;

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changing a size of a mark in a manner corresponding to the degree of difficulty of the technique;

guiding an inputting operation of a command for causing the play character to perform a technique corresponding to the set degree of difficulty;

evaluating the technique performed by inputting the command in accordance with the guide through operation of a first operable member;

setting the size of said mark in response to operations of a second operable member by the game player within a predetermined time period;

setting a landing setting display area for setting the landing of the play character in a partial area of the game screen image[[,]]; C1

setting a landing success zone in the landing setting display area[[,]];

displaying a landing mark which is movable[[, and]];

enabling landing of the play character through operation of a fourth operable member provided in the operation unit when the landing mark is located within the landing success zone; and

causing the play character to land.

16. (Currently amended) A computer readable recording medium storing a technique setting program in a video game for displaying a play character in a game screen image displayed on a monitor and causing the play character to perform a plurality of techniques having different degrees of difficulty and prepared in advance

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by operating an operation unit, the technique setting program comprising the steps of:

setting a degree of difficulty of a technique to be performed by the play character;

progressively increasing changing a size of a mark in [a manner corresponding to] in correspondence with a greater the degree of difficulty of the technique;

guiding an inputting operation of a command for causing the play character to perform a technique corresponding to the set degree of difficulty;

C (evaluating the technique performed by inputting the command in accordance with the guide through operation of a first operable member; and

setting the size of said mark in response to operations of a second operable member by the game player within a predetermined time period.

17. (Canceled)

18. (Original) A computer readable recording medium according to claim 16, wherein the technique setting program further comprising a step of changing a mark corresponding to the degree of difficulty through operation of a third operable member.

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19. (Original) A computer readable recording medium according to claim 16, wherein the technique setting program further comprising the step of causing the play character to land.

20. (Currently amended) A computer readable recording medium according to claim 19, wherein the technique setting program further storing a technique setting program in a video game for displaying a play character in a game screen image displayed on a monitor and causing the play character to perform a plurality of techniques having different degrees of difficulty and prepared in advance by operating an operation unit, the technique setting program comprising the steps of:

setting a degree of difficulty of a technique to be performed by the play character;

changing a size of a mark in a manner corresponding to the degree of difficulty of the technique;

guiding an inputting operation of a command for causing the play character to perform a technique corresponding to the set degree of difficulty;

evaluating the technique performed by inputting the command in accordance with the guide through operation of a first operable member;

setting the size of said mark in response to operations of a second operable member by the game player within a predetermined time period;

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setting a landing setting display area for setting the landing of the play character in a partial area of the game screen image[[,]];

setting a landing success zone in the landing setting display area[[,]];

displaying a landing mark which is movable[[, and]];

enabling landing of the play character through operation of a fourth operable member provided in the operation unit when the landing mark is located within the landing success zone; and

causing the play character to land.

21. (Original) A computer readable recording medium according to claim 20, wherein the landing success zone is set narrower as the degree of difficulty is set higher.

22. (Original) A computer readable recording medium according to claim 16, wherein a command input area is set in a partial area of the game screen image, and the command is displayed in the input area in the form of icons.

23. (Original) A computer readable recording medium according to claim 16, wherein a higher evaluation is given as a shorter time is required to input the command.

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24. (Original) A computer readable recording medium according to claim 16, wherein, when the input of the command is not completed within the predetermined time, the play character is caused to perform an action different from the one performed when it is completed within the predetermined time.

25. (Original) A computer readable recording medium according to claim 16, wherein the play character is caused to perform a complicated technique when the set degree of difficulty is high.

C (26. (Currently Amended) A video game device for displaying a play character on a game screen image displayed on a monitor and causing the play character to perform a plurality of techniques having different degrees of difficulty, comprising:

a degree of difficulty setting unit for setting a degree of difficulty of a technique to be performed by the play character, said degree of difficulty setting unit including a mark changing unit for automatically increasing a size of a mark, said size of said mark being increased in correspondence with a greater corresponding to the degree of difficulty of the technique;

a command guiding unit for guiding an command input for causing the play character to perform a technique corresponding to the set degree of difficulty,

an operation unit for causing the play character to perform the technique according to the set degree of difficulty, the operation unit including:

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a first operable member for inputting the command in accordance with the command input guide given by the command guiding unit, and

a second operable member, operated by a game player, for causing said mark changing unit to stop increasing the size of said mark in response to operation of said second operable member performed by the game player;

an evaluating unit for evaluating the technique performed in accordance with a command given by the first operable member.

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27. (Previously presented) The video game device according to claim 1, wherein said mark changing unit changes the size of the mark in accordance with the number of operations of the second operable member performed by the game player within the predetermined time period.

28. (Previously presented) The video game device according to claim 27, wherein said size of the mark grows as the number of operations of the second operable member increases and said command guiding unit displays on the game screen image a series of command inputs to be sequentially followed by the game player for the player character to perform a technique in accordance with the size of the mark.

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29. (Previously presented) The video game device according to claim 27, wherein said second operable member is comprised of two operable buttons and the degree of difficulty of the technique to be performed by the player character is increased as the number of alternative on-and-off operations of the two operable buttons increases within the predetermined time period.

30. (New) A video game device for displaying a play character on a game screen image displayed on a monitor and causing the play character to perform a plurality of techniques having different degrees of difficulty, comprising:

C1 a degree of difficulty setting unit for setting a degree of difficulty of a technique to be performed by the play character, said degree of difficulty setting unit including a mark changing unit for changing a size of a mark, said size thereof corresponding to the degree of difficulty in such a manner that the larger the size thereof the higher the level of difficulty is;

a command setting unit for setting a command to be followed by a game player in accordance with the set degree of difficulty;

a command guiding unit for guiding a command input for causing the player character to perform a technique corresponding to the set degree of difficulty;

an operation unit for causing the play character to perform the technique according to the set degree of difficulty, the operation unit including:

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a first operable member for inputting the command in accordance with the command input guide given by the command guiding unit; and

an a second operable member, operated by a game player, for causing said mark changing unit to set the size of said mark in response to the operations thereof performed by a game player within a predetermined time period in such that as a number of operations performed by the game player within the predetermined time period increases, the degree of difficulty set increases to a higher level; and

an evaluation unit for evaluating the technique performed in accordance with a command given by the first operable member.
